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ABSTRACT

This guide is designed for companies that are working to strengthen schools. It is meant to help state and local business leaders become more effective advocates for building and sustaining the necessary community support for rigorous assessments of student achievement. The ultimate goal of educational improvement efforts must be to improve student achievement, and not just to set standards. The guide contains options for helping build public awareness of and support for rigorous assessments (chapter 2), as well as advice form business leaders in several states who have helped build and sustain support for new assessments (chapter 3). Some of the issues and debates surrounding tough new assessments are reviewed in chapter 4. Appendixes A and B contain explanations of different types of tests and how they are used, with a sample communications plan. Appendix C contains resources for learning more about standards, assessments, and building public engagement around higher student achievement. An attached diagram shows nine components of a successful education system. (SLD)

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THE BUSINESS ROUNDTABLE

A BUSINESS LEADER'S GUIDE

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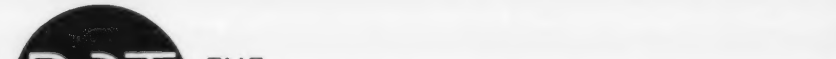
The Business Roundtable is an association of chief executive officers of leading U.S. corporations with a combined workforce of more than 10 million employees in the United States. The chief executives are committed to advocating public policies that foster vigorous economic growth; a dynamic global economy; and a well-trained and productive U.S. workforce essential for future competitiveness. Established in 1972, the Roundtable was founded in the belief that chief executives of major corporations should take an increased role in the continuing debates about public policy.

A principal strength of the Roundtable is the extent of participation by the chief executive officers of the member companies. The Roundtable is selective in the issues it studies; a principal criterion is the impact the problem will have on the economic well-being of the nation. Working in task forces on specific issues, the chief executives direct research, supervise preparation of position papers, recommend policy, and lobby Congress and the Administration on select issues. The Education Task Force focuses on improving the performance of our schools, from kindergarten through grade 12, in each state.

The Roundtable believes that the basic interests of business closely parallel the interests of the American people, who are directly involved as consumers, employees, shareholders and suppliers. Thus, chief executives, although they speak as individuals, have responsibilities that relate to many factors — including jobs, products, services and return on investment — that affect the economic well-being of all Americans.

building support for tests that count



A BUSINESS LEADER'S GUIDE

November 1998

Acknowledgments

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Foreword

One of my colleagues at State Farm has a saying: "The checker gets what the checker checks."

For obvious reasons, this came to mind as I prepared to introduce this report for companies that are working to strengthen schools. In other words, what you measure, and how, sends a very clear signal about what's important to you, about what you value.

This report builds on *A Business Leader's Guide to Setting Academic Standards*, published in June 1996. That publication focused explicitly on the need for challenging academic standards — and how business leaders can work with state policymakers, educators, parents and the public to ensure that state standards are as good as the best in the world. Several states have made good progress.

But our ultimate goal is improving student achievement, not just setting standards. Standards, as essential as they are, are not enough. Assessment and accountability, in fact, make standards real — and are the subject of this guide.

Our ultimate goal is improving student achievement, not just setting standards.

The business community is in an ideal position to assist educators in these interdependent areas of standards, assessments and accountability, which comprise three of the nine points in the Roundtable's nine-point agenda (see inside back cover). Quality companies regularly set goals (our equivalent of academic content standards in education). They measure progress in all operations. And they use the information gained from assessments to make continuous improvements.

Just as important, well-managed companies know the importance of thinking and acting strategically; of communicating expectations clearly (in this case, to students, parents and educators); and of imparting a sense of urgency about their work.

As described more fully in the following pages, good tests serve many purposes. As a diagnostic tool, assessment results distinguish performance that's acceptable from performance that's not. Good tests can identify the strengths and weaknesses of individual students, individual classrooms and individual schools. From there, the community is in a better position to hold educators and students accountable, and to refocus the curriculum and instruction accordingly.

The recent results from the Third International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) tests offer an excellent example of diagnosis leading to a prescription and ultimately (we hope) to a cure. While many headline writers focused on the woeful numerical showing of our high school students (19th out of 21 industrialized countries in math and 16th out of 21 in science), the real news is how the TIMSS results have prompted analyses of our weaknesses and initiated specific strategies to strengthen math and science curriculum in the United States.

As an accountability tool, tests also show policymakers and the public how effectively their education tax dollars are being spent — which students, schools and districts are improving; which are doing poorly; and where additional assistance is needed.

The skill levels for all jobs will be much higher in the next century.

We have no time to lose. A business colleague calls education reform "the mother of all business issues." It's true. In a world where the battle for competitive advantage has intensified, the successful enterprise will still have high-skill and medium-skill jobs, but fewer low-skill jobs. And the skill levels for all jobs, even the lowest, will be much higher in the next century.

As anyone who has tried to turn around a large organization knows, change is painful. It's easier to talk about than to do. What's inspiring about the lessons and stories in this guide is that they report examples of progress in states and communities just like yours. Success is possible — and imperative.

Edward B. Rust, Jr.

Edward B. Rust, Jr.
Chairman and CEO
State Farm Insurance Companies
Chairman, Education Task Force
The Business Roundtable

Introduction

Nearly every state is developing or implementing academic standards that spell out what students should learn in school and how well they should learn it. But standards are just the first step in making sure that today's young people are prepared for the workplace, higher education, and productive and effective citizenship.

Assessments that measure students' progress toward meeting those standards are the next vital step. Such tests help states and school districts — as well as parents and students — understand how well students, schools and districts are performing and where there is room for improvement. They answer the bottom-line question: how are we doing?

Assessments also ensure that the standards are taken seriously. When standards of learning are high and assessments are geared to such standards, teaching improves and student achievement rises. Strong standards and tests are the essential foundation for the comprehensive school improvement that the Roundtable advocates (see nine-point agenda, inside back cover).

This guide is designed to help state and local business leaders become more effective advocates for building — and sustaining — the necessary community support for rigorous assessments of student achievement. As this guide illustrates, the buy-in of parents, teachers, businesspeople and the entire community spells the difference between success and failure.

Many issues arise when states and communities implement new tests. What should be the relative emphasis of basic facts vs. problem-solving skills? Is it enough that students know the formulas, or should they be required to actually demonstrate their understanding of the concepts? This report was prepared to help business leaders help their states and communities address complicated questions like these.

All over the country, the business community has played an important role in putting high standards at the top of the education agenda. Now businesspeople need to take the lead in making rigorous assessments a priority as well.

The guide contains:

- Options for helping to build public awareness of and support for rigorous assessments (Chapter II);
- Advice from business leaders in several states who have helped to build and sustain support for new assessments (Chapter III);
- A look at some of the issues and debates surrounding tough new assessments (Chapter IV);
- Explanations of different types of tests and how they are used and a sample communications plan (Appendices A and B); and
- Resources for learning more about standards, assessments and building public engagement around higher student achievement (Appendix C).

Getting Involved: What you can do to build support

Having higher expectations for students comes at a political and a financial price. Demanding that students — as well as schools and school districts — perform better and achieve more means that measurements of achievement must change.

Change in itself is usually enough to kindle uneasiness. In the case of more rigorous state assessments, especially those with high stakes for educators and students, change has produced confusion and sometimes fierce opposition.

Business leaders around the country have found many ways to help overcome these challenges. This section offers a menu of options for building the necessary public understanding of and support for new tests, plus short descriptions of how business groups in some states are taking action. You can adapt these ideas to suit the situation in your state. For more information about the groups or activities described below, see Appendix C.

Influence policy to develop rigorous tests

First things first. State policymakers first need to be persuaded that stronger tests should be aligned to challenging academic standards. Currently, few states have developed such a combination of standards and assessments.

Test Your Own State

One way to see if your state has high standards and challenging tests is to compare students' scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), considered the most rigorous American assessment, with their scores on state tests. A revealing study of several southern states conducted a few years ago showed that students in most states had much lower NAEP scores than state scores — indicating that the state tests were not nearly as rigorous as NAEP.

Several states — Colorado, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Oregon — have had their students take the TIMSS tests and then compared their scores in math and science with the scores of students from other nations. Another option is to urge your governor to request a benchmarking analysis from Achieve, a nonprofit organization formed by the nation's governors and leading corporate chief executives, to see how your state's standards and tests measure up to the best in the world.

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Business organizations in states such as Florida, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Ohio and Washington have played central roles in successfully advocating for quality tests. For instance, during election years, members of the Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT) survey candidates to determine their positions on standards and assessment issues and organize forums where candidates meet with business leaders to discuss and clarify these positions. MBRT members also have testified in the state legislature to oppose moves to eliminate state tests. To further their own efforts, members of the Partnership for Learning in Washington meet with newly elected legislators every two years to reinforce the business community's school-improvement agenda.

Maryland

Washington

Massachusetts

In 1993, the Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education worked with business organizations and local chambers of commerce to galvanize support for a sweeping reform law that focused on higher standards and resulting high-stakes assessments. More recently, a coalition of school superintendents and business and civic leaders (the Massachusetts Coalition for Higher Standards) helped prepare the public for the first administration of the state's new test in spring 1998, and now is working with the state on implementation policies and developing local leadership groups to support school change.

Missouri

Business leaders in Missouri have provided assistance during the development of the statewide assessment, as well as the establishment of the levels of achievement for students. In addition, The Partnership for Outstanding Schools, a nonprofit organization of business and community members in Missouri, was established to help provide support for current reform efforts.

Help make sure the new test is worth supporting

Business leaders can play an especially useful role in making sure new state tests are both rigorous and relevant. One option is to participate on committees that determine the types of tests (or test questions) used and the standards of proficiency (how good is good enough). Developing these proficiency standards often is referred to as "setting cut scores" -- the all-important process of deciding how many correct answers students must have for each level of proficiency (18 of 22 correct for "advanced," 14 of 22 correct for "proficient," etc.). Business leaders throughout Washington state served on cut-score committees to help review questions; their expertise added significantly to the credibility of the scores.

Washington

Business leaders also can review the test to correlate student performance on it to the ability to perform well in the workplace. An MBRT committee drafted "Skills for Success," a set of performance tasks that students need to demonstrate to be successful in the workplace. The MBRT then worked to incorporate these skills into the state's high school core learning goals, which will be linked to a new high-stakes assessment as part of the Maryland State

Maryland

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Performance Assessment Program (MSPAP). More recently, the MBRT worked with state organizations to survey more than 1,000 Maryland companies to determine the skills employers will want in entry-level employees in the future. They found, for example, that 73 percent of companies are looking for communications skills at a higher level than those possessed by current graduates. Coincidentally, the survey results were released when foes of a tough new graduation test were mounting strong opposition. The business community's reality check helped bolster the resolve of policymakers.

Ohio

The Ohio Business Roundtable, along with the state Department of Education and ACT, Inc., prepared a similar study, testing 14,000 high school seniors and documenting the gap between what these students knew and what they should know in the workplace. The results are being used to sustain the business community's push for higher standards and increased accountability.

Underwrite communications campaigns

Developing a challenging assessment is just the first step. Developing and maintaining broad support for the assessment is a longer-term priority and challenge. To achieve this goal, business groups around the country are helping to produce communications campaigns that include print and broadcast materials and hands-on workshops for community leaders. This is the kind of work for which state education departments are woefully understaffed and underfunded.

The Importance of Listening

Like the Partnership for Learning in Washington, the MBRT also has made strategic investments in public opinion research. Based largely on findings from MBRT-sponsored focus group meetings with parents, teachers and principals in 1996, state education leaders mounted a comprehensive campaign to build public awareness and solicit input and support for high school improvement. The focus groups revealed widespread concern about the fairness of implementing high-stakes graduation tests before other school improvements are implemented. Partly as a result of this research, the state delayed the introduction of these new exams.

Washington

When Washington's Partnership for Learning started work in early 1995, it conducted public opinion polls. The surveys revealed that very few people had even heard about the legislative reforms passed in 1993, but they liked the component parts, such as higher standards and statewide assessments to measure student performance. As a result of this research, the Partnership focused on building public awareness and understanding of the reform legislation. "Without understanding, reform plans can crumble. We knew that success would require that the public become involved and informed. And we looked around and saw that no one was doing this work," says Bill Porter, director of the Partnership. Samples of the Partnership's communications plan and annual goals and activities are included in Appendix B.

Funded mainly by contributions from businesses in Washington, such as The Boeing Company, Microsoft, Washington Mutual and Weyerhaeuser, the Partnership concentrated initially on outreach to key audiences: opinion leaders, community movers and shakers, editorial writers, and chambers of commerce. "We needed to develop awareness, but you can't easily afford to help the whole world learn about this issue," explains Porter. "Full-page ads in the major newspapers in our state would consume our budget for the rest of the year."

Therefore, as part of its multifaceted agenda, the Partnership helped underwrite two sets of materials to help parents understand the state's new standards and assessment. The first set included a video and a handbook for parents that explained what the test was all about. Along with the results of the assessments, parents received a second set of print materials that described the test and the performance standards.

To leverage its resources, the Partnership also offered local workshops to these key audiences, giving corporate representatives, PTA leaders and school district public relations managers the tools to get the word out in their own communities.

Participants in the workshops learned key messages to communicate, tips for working with the media and advice on making presentations to large and small groups. In turn, smaller groups have sprung up around the state.

Kentucky

The Partnership for Kentucky Schools funded an eight-page advertising insert for parents and members of the community entitled, "Reaching Higher: Understanding how strong standards boost student learning in Kentucky." The insert went into newspapers in Kentucky's major media markets, and the Partnership distributed additional copies through direct mail and at other events and forums. A total of 1.5 million copies have been distributed. Partnership members also have organized community forums and focus groups, appeared on radio talk shows, produced videos, conducted surveys and lobbied policymakers.

Challenge Me

One cost-effective way for state business groups to help build support for high standards and tough tests is to piggyback on the national public service advertising campaign being sponsored by the Education Excellence Partnership and the Ad Council. The new campaign, which began in fall 1998, centers on the research finding that high school students themselves want to be more challenged in school. Many know that they're currently just "getting by."

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Massachusetts The Massachusetts Coalition for Higher Standards used a similar, positive message in *Starting Now*, a four-page newsletter that gave parents, businesspeople and community leaders more information about high standards and rigorous assessment and helped them learn more ways to get involved in improving public education. CEOs of major state and local businesses mailed the brochure to their employees with a cover letter stating their support for higher standards. Approximately 250,000 copies of the publication were distributed, including 50,000 copies in Spanish. Recognizing that education is a local issue, the Coalition, which includes large urban districts and rich suburban communities, is developing long-term local initiatives.

Campaigns like this often remind people of why the new assessments are being conducted in the first place — not to penalize students for getting low scores, but to make it clear what successful student performance looks like, and why it's so important.

Win buy-in from teachers

Winning the support of classroom teachers is essential. First, teachers typically are the most credible source of information in their communities, especially among parents; if teachers do not support the new assessments, parents are likely to be concerned as well. Second, many teachers will need additional training themselves to help their students master the higher-level schoolwork that the new tests measure; recent national studies find that large percentages of teachers do not have the necessary expertise to teach high-level curriculum.

States and districts that do not plan for this professional development for educators — and budget for it — are likely to face teacher resistance and continued low scores on the new tests. Teachers cannot teach what they do not fully understand themselves.

Kentucky To help address this challenge, the Partnership for Kentucky Schools has published guidelines and policy recommendations on professional development for the state's teachers and uses grants from The Pew Charitable Trusts and the Annie E. Casey Foundation to fund research on professional development practices. "Quality professional development is the key to successful implementation of education reform. The Partnership gets grants for professional development for teachers and has made presentations to the state legislature. This area parallels what goes on in the business arena, because a business cannot successfully change without buy-in from and training for employees," says Carolyn Witt Jones, the Partnership's executive director.

Speak out — and take a public stand

Maryland Successful communications campaigns often involve significant hands-on, public involvement by business executives. The MBRT recruited, organized and trained a 45-member Speakers Bureau. Augmented by a specially produced video and brochure (funded by a grant from

the Annie E. Casey Foundation), speakers make presentations to business and community groups across the state on the importance of high standards and rigorous assessments.

Florida

In Florida, *Orlando Sentinel* publisher John Puerner, who is a member of the Governor's Commission on Education and was active in reviewing standards and assessments, makes sure his newspaper gives education improvement initiatives front-page coverage. He also meets with journalists himself and has encouraged the state education commissioner to meet with editorial boards, teachers and parent organizations to introduce the Florida Comprehensive Assessment Test (FCAT).

Use your companies to reach parents and citizens

Kentucky

Ashland Inc., whose former CEO, John Hall, is a founding member of the Kentucky Partnership, developed the 1992 KERA Fair, which was the first in a series held by employers around the state. The day-long event at two Ashland locations had booths with exhibits and information about the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA), its learning goals and related topics. "Employees came through during their breaks. We even brought a primary classroom from a local school to the fair — we hired a moving truck and moved it in, furniture and all; we virtually recreated the classroom. The kids arrived by bus and did their work, because it was a real class day for them," recalls Martha Johnson, the company's director of corporate community relations and public policy analysis.

"Our employees could see what was going on, and talk to the teacher and the kids. This countered the 'That's not the way we used to do it' objections of those who aren't involved in their local schools. This was a good introduction to the changes, providing information directly to employees."

Maryland

In Maryland, John Derrick, president and CEO of Potomac Electric Power Company, is showing similar leadership. As a member of the MBRT's Speakers Bureau, he conducts "brown bag lunches" with his employees, where he joins them to talk about the importance of high standards and assessments and to answer their questions about the changes taking place in classrooms around the state. "They're a pretty diverse group," Derrick says. "Attendance is purely voluntary. I'm reaching out to them not just as employees, but as parents and members of the community." In Washington, employers such as Weyerhaeuser, SAFECO Insurance and ARCO have hosted similar events. Attendees take sample fourth- and seventh-grade tests, receive No. 2 pencils and apples, and have a chance to question leaders from the Partnership for Learning.

Washington

Encourage parents, your employees and other community members to take the test — or review sample items — to gauge its rigor and become familiar with content

Seeing is believing. Sometimes parents and business and community leaders fear that new tests might neglect the basics in favor of some form of "dumbed-down" standards. One effective way to overcome such skepticism is to have people take the test themselves. One or two challenging items should suffice for most adults; a solid middle school math problem often is enough to persuade most people that the best of the new tests are rigorous enough for students in their own community.

Indiana

As part of its ISTEP+ program, Indiana had a committee — made up of businesspeople, labor leaders, family values representatives, and Republican and Democrat legislators — review the test items for content that could be construed as offensive. Positive feedback from committee members was important in bolstering public support for the state's new assessment program. This support also helped Indiana avoid the kind of controversy that surrounded the California Learning Assessment System (CLAS) in 1994, when widespread misconceptions about reading items were partly responsible for CLAS's demise.

Washington

Washington's Partnership for Learning produces brochures and newspaper inserts that contain sample questions from the state's new assessments for fourth, seventh and 10th graders. The Partnership has had educators, reporters, parents and businesspeople take the tests — and not just look at them — to understand exactly what is expected of students. An innovative partnership with McDonald's puts sample questions on place mats at fast-food franchises throughout the state (see opposite page).

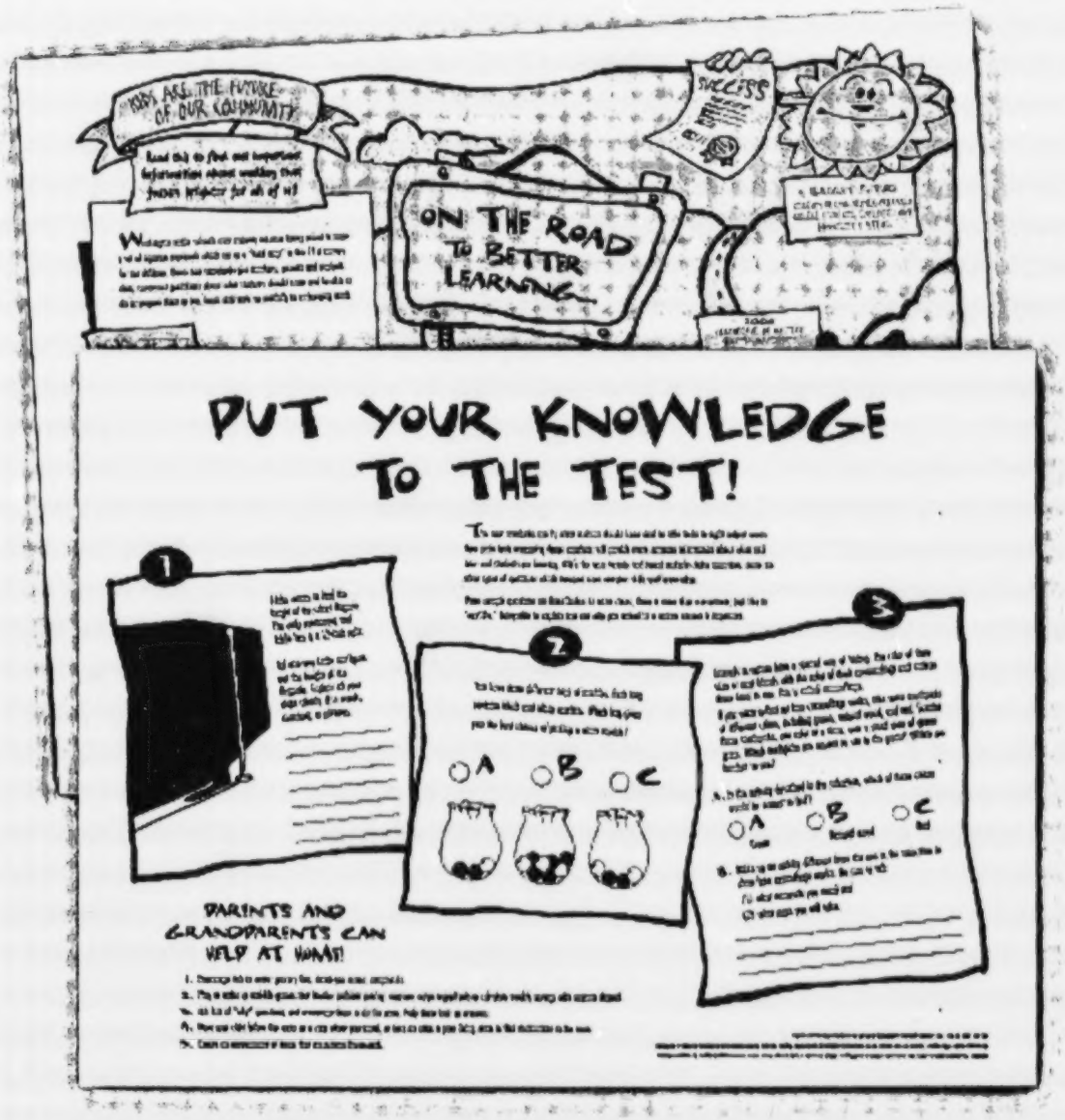
Texas

The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) is aligned with the state's learning standards. It is given in reading and math in grades 3–8 and in grade 10; in writing in grades 4, 8 and 10; and in science and social studies in grade 8. In response to a lawsuit from parents who were concerned about the content of the test, the Texas education agency decided to release the whole test after administration each year. Although this was a costly decision, because it requires developing new test items each year, it proved to be a very smart political move for the state. Critics who charged that the test probed inappropriately into students' attitudes and values were able to review released tests to ensure that they focused on academics only. Teachers have acknowledged that it has been very helpful to see how the tests measure the state's learning standards.

The Texas Business and Education Coalition is making recommendations to improve the assessment by reviewing the released test, too. According to John Stevens, executive director, "I would recommend every state consider releasing tests to the public because there are so many benefits."

Place Mats With a Purpose

Washington's Partnership for Learning worked with McDonald's to put sample test questions on place mats at fast-food franchises throughout the state.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Comparing Among States

In response to requests from parents and businesspeople to see more comparative information about student scores, some states are working with Achieve, a nonprofit group established by the nation's governors and leading corporate chief executives after the 1996 National Education Summit, to embed some identical items into each state test. And starting in 1999, states can participate in the international TIMSS tests, to see how their students stack up in math and science with their peers from around the world. Meanwhile, NAEP scores in math, reading and science provide the best current comparative yardstick.

Missouri

Missouri releases a portion of the assessment items used each year. The scoring guides, sample student work and a listing of common errors also are released with each item. This provides teachers with a better understanding of the types of items used and how they will be scored.

Make sure results are clearly and widely reported; use scores to maintain momentum for improvement

Florida

Part of this challenge is to help shape expectations early. Florida Governor Lawton Chiles, a Democrat, and state Education Commissioner Frank Brogan, a Republican, joined with legislators, educators and business leaders at a press conference to warn the public to expect low scores on the FCAT, first administered in spring 1998. They hope early warnings and bipartisan support will help the state ride out any controversy over potentially low results. Members of the business community have adopted what amounts to a mantra when discussing the FCAT: "Don't flinch."

Colorado

Make sure, however, not to take the precautionary messages too far. To ward off the "test backlash" experienced by other states in response to low initial test scores, Colorado adopted a unique public relations strategy to announce the results of the initial round of its new statewide assessment program in November 1997. The commissioner of education boasted, "We're happy to announce the worst test results in the history of the state." A headline in *Education Week*, the most widely read education newspaper in the country, announced "Colo. Officials Couldn't Be Happier With Low Scores." Although the article goes on to say that officials explained how low scores signify that expectations for students are much higher than before, reaction to this approach has been mixed.

Business leaders can help states communicate student assessment results to parents and communities. In Ohio, the Ohio Business Roundtable assembled a task force of business professionals to create a unique partnership with the Ohio Department of Education and the state board of education. The group developed a series of report card prototypes to be distributed at the school district and school building level. The objective was to create clear, concise and credible information on student and school performance. The first report cards were rolled out to the public in June 1998, with immediate buy-in and acclaim from the business community.

Ohio

Use assessment results to change corporate practice and strengthen the business community's relationship with schools

When hiring entry-level employees, ask them for school records, transcripts or test score results. Publicize the company's policy of using student records as a hiring prerequisite. Provide motivation for students and back-up for teachers and parents by communicating the message that "academics count." This message is the centerpiece of a campaign sponsored by the Business Coalition for Education Reform, 13 national business organizations including The Business Roundtable, National Alliance of Business and U.S. Chamber of Commerce, to encourage more employers to use transcripts or other student records when recruiting entry-level workers.

Business Coalition for Education Reform

Working with the state department of education and the chamber of commerce, the Partnership for Kentucky Schools has launched a campaign, called "Learning Equals Earning," that encourages employers to ask for school records from job applicants. "We're working with school districts on developing simplified transcripts so human resources personnel can realistically use the information," says the Partnership's Jones. "Assessments are a huge piece of school records. We believe there is a place on school records for our state assessment results, but of course, this is ultimately a decision for local schools."

Kentucky

Local business groups in the state also have become involved. The business community in Nelson County, Ky., has worked with educators to standardize definitions of school grades to make transcripts more useful to employers.

Stay vigilant — and never give up

Kentucky business leaders, who have worked successfully for several years to build legislative and political support for standards-based reform in the state, recently had to mount a last-minute rally to save key portions of Kentucky's education reform plan: the state's controversial test and accountability system.

Kentucky

Over the past few years, numerous criticisms have been leveled at the state's performance-based assessment system, KIRIS (Kentucky Instructional Results Information System). Some schools were accused of cheating and inflating grades. Some test scores were miscalculated and had to be refigured. Critics complained that too many items were being scored subjectively — and inaccurately. And some residents did not like that KIRIS results could not be compared with test scores from other states. Concerns were intensified because test scores were tied directly to high-stakes cash rewards for high-performing schools and sanctions for the low performers.

The criticisms came to a head in February 1998, when the state Senate voted to gut KIRIS. The final compromise law preserves Kentucky's educational goals, keeps the focus of teaching on the core content areas and maintains accountability. However, it will end KIRIS this year and introduce a new test in 1999 and a new system for holding schools and districts accountable for academic results in 2000. Jones noted one lesson: "In the future, we have to let our business supporters know earlier what's at stake and what their role can be in fighting for what they originally deemed so important."

III Advice from state coalition leaders

This report was based largely on conversations with experienced business coalition leaders from several states. The previous chapter summarized their recommendations for action. This chapter features their broader observations about lessons learned in the field, starting with their blunt advice to set priorities from among the many possible activities described in Chapter II.

Be strategic and set priorities

Washington's Bill Porter (Partnership for Learning) advises: "When you have limited resources, you have to be strategic. We have a narrow slice of the mission — developing awareness — and we have used our resources well." Adds Carolyn Witt Jones (Partnership for Kentucky Schools): "We can't do everything, and we can't solve all the problems — but we can help identify the issues and support needed change. And we can get the stakeholders together. Businesspeople are able to convene and facilitate the work of these groups."

Help people understand the big picture from the special perspective of business

"When you have limited resources, you have to be strategic."

One important role for business is to help keep people focused on "the main thing" — improved student achievement. People often need to be reminded why new tests are needed and how they fit into the overall school reform effort. "People's attention gets grabbed by 'the tests,' as if they are something that stands alone. But these changes are not about assessment — assessment is simply a tool linked to larger goals," says Maryland's Kathy Fitzgerald (Strategic Consulting Associates). "This is how business can help, at both the state and the local level — by being a strong, consistent voice of reality around outcomes: better prepared young people, a higher quality workforce, a stronger state economy."

Washington's Jeff Estes (Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratories) adds: "Focus on the academics and remember that you can't get deep understanding in 20 minutes. Keep talking. This is a very public process. People deserve a chance to be part of it, to understand it."

A corollary to this advice is to stay very focused on the parts of the debate where business has special expertise. Maryland's John Derrick (Potomac Electric Power Company): "Holding the high ground works. Don't get bogged down in the details. MBRT is not micromanaging this process. We're helping articulate the problems, and we'll work to have a school system that is responsive to those problems."

Talk about what you know. "Find one or two issues that you're interested in and can relate to your own work — for example, technology. You have to be willing to put time into reading, but try to do more: Visit a classroom, talk to a teacher, connect yourself to the classroom experience," says Kentucky's Martha Johnson (Ashland Inc.). "Second, talk only about what you know. It's okay to say you don't know something, just don't try to talk about issues that aren't 'yours.'"

And don't get bogged down in turf battles. "We are not ego-driven, and we don't worry about turf. We're doing a lot of our work behind the scenes, and it doesn't matter who gets the credit. This work is about something bigger than us," says Washington's Porter.

"Focus on the academics."

Be especially sensitive to parents

June Streckfus (MBRT) recalls that the strongest opposition to assessments came from parents, mostly because of misinformation or misunderstanding. Her advice: "Communication with parents is vital. Keep it simple, honest and direct."

Kentucky's Johnson cautions: "When you're talking to parents, it's a very, very personal thing for them. You have to be careful. Parents' objections are usually just about the idea of a change; often the problem is a lack of information. The idea is to lead them to information sources instead of saying 'You're wrong.' Just being able to refer people to the Partnership for Kentucky Schools' toll-free number is one of the best tools I have."

Measure progress — and don't blink

Businesses can be especially useful in insisting on measuring progress and focusing on results. "Just throwing money around isn't going to do it. What helps is the application of commonsense, businesslike criteria. You must measure progress, otherwise you are not going to get anywhere. And it's incumbent on businesspeople to make sure the state's politicians understand this," according to Maryland's Derrick.

"Talk only about what you know."

"When we first started, some community members thought that the standards and the tests weren't going to be around for long, that they were a fad," recalls Streckfus from Maryland. "But we never blinked. We haven't lost any of the pieces. The legislature is behind reform a thousand percent. The superintendent is a visionary. The union is at the table and supportive. And the business community has been unwavering."

Don't rely too much on print and broadcast materials

Print and video materials can be effective tools, as this report has demonstrated. But never lose sight of the power of face-to-face conversations. "Although materials and events are helpful, successful outreach is more about local conversations, centering around the question of what people want for and from their local schools. Businesses can be a part of this through convening the conversation or at least participating in it. These local conversations are the most time- and resource-consuming methods of generating support, but they are also the most effective," says Kentucky's Jones.

"Successful outreach is about ... what people want for and from their local schools."

Be cautious about relying on a single high-stakes test

This has been of particular issue in Kentucky, where schools and educators had so much riding on the KIRIS exam. "There's no such thing as a perfect test. And since any test is an easy political target, it is a waste of time to search for the perfect test. Multiple measures are far better as good policy and good politics," advises Bob Sexton, executive director of the Prichard Committee for Academic Excellence, a nonpartisan citizens advocacy group that works to improve public education in Kentucky.

Slow down if necessary — change takes time

Opposition and confusion among teachers and parents have convinced some states to phase in new accountability policies gradually to give teachers adequate time to prepare students. Slower might be better.

For example, Washington state began requiring fourth-grade students to take the test in 1998, a year after piloting it. But the state doesn't plan to make the 10th-grade test a graduation requirement until 2006 — when this year's fourth graders are seniors. Maryland has been administering its rigorous school accountability tests (the MSPAP) in grades 3, 5 and 8 since 1991, but high school graduation will not be tied to new end-of-course exams until 2004.

IV Issues and Debates: What you can expect to encounter

This chapter describes some of the more common political and educational issues that businesspeople are likely to encounter as they take the lead in building public support for challenging assessments. Forewarned is forearmed, as the saying goes. The good news, as the previous chapters make clear, is that business and school-improvement groups around the country have developed sound strategies for addressing each of the issues profiled below.

What is tested — and how?

Many of the newer tests supplement traditional multiple-choice questions with more open-ended tasks, such as having students write essays, complete multipart problems and explain their answers. Students sometimes work in teams. States such as **Kentucky** and **Vermont** base part of their assessments on student work collected over the entire year — not just during the testing period.

Proponents say this kind of in-depth probing of student performance offers a much more complete picture of students' knowledge and skills. But frequently they are confronted by parents and others who ask, "If the old tests were good enough for me when I was in school, why aren't they good enough for my children?" Some say the new tests rely too much on problem-solving process skills and not enough on facts and content (e.g., "Who was the first president of the U.S.?").

Business organizations in Maryland and Ohio surveyed employers to determine what skills today's workers need. See page 7.

What does it take to pass?

Newer state tests, just like the newer standards, tend to be more challenging than traditional state exams, which have measured low-level skills. For example, many states now require high school graduates to have only sixth- to ninth-grade levels of proficiency.

Not surprisingly, students initially tend to score much lower on the newer tests. Even the scores of college-bound students have been low. This is distressing for students, parents and classroom teachers alike — and in states such as **Michigan,** has produced a severe backlash (see sidebar, opposite).

Moreover, the setting of passing scores — often called "cut scores" — is intensely political and complex. High cut scores translate into high failure rates, but low cut scores (and high pass rates) cause people to question whether the new standards and tests are really any more challenging than the old minimum-competency exams.

To see how business leaders in Washington helped set cut scores, refer to page 6.

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Michigan's Ongoing Strife

Michigan first administered its statewide high school test, the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP), in 1995. The business community, dismayed by high school graduates' lack of basic skills, had been strongly behind both the assessment and the voluntary standards on which it is based. The tough test covers 10th-grade reading, writing, math and science skills. A minimum score is not required for graduation, but results (formerly "proficient," "novice" and "not-yet novice") are included on student transcripts.

Two years later, in 1997, parents in some areas virtually boycotted the test. The uproar was initially sparked by complaints from teachers, most of whom felt left out of the creation of both the standards and the MEAP. Teachers and parents alike were hostile to the idea of 11 hours of valuable class time taken up by the test, and parents in particular felt the test might hurt the chances of college-bound students.

Although the test was modified to address the concerns of teachers and parents as well as business leaders, more opposition surfaced in spring 1998. Schools were undermining the revised tests by making it easy for parents to obtain test waivers for students, an option theoretically reserved for only students with severe learning disabilities and a few others. The board of education revised the grading categories to "exceeded standards," "met standards," "basic endorsement" and "unendorsed." The new categories were more palatable to parents and students, but business leaders saw them as a lowering of the bar.

The ongoing battle has left scars. "Find your courage. The battle can get nasty," advises Jim Sandy, who directs the Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence.

What happens to students and schools with low scores?

Increasingly, new state assessments are accompanied by consequences for schools, teachers and students. Low-performing schools are being placed on probation and, in states such as **Maryland** and **New Jersey**, are eligible to be taken over by the state. **Kentucky** has been using test scores to give financial bonuses to teachers, which has pitted some schools against others.

Kentucky is changing its tests and accountability system in response to criticisms. ***See page 16.***

A growing number of states plan to use test scores to determine whether students can be promoted to the next grade or, even more importantly, graduate from high school. Cities such as **Chicago** and **Washington, D.C.**, already are using student scores for these purposes, and large numbers of students are attending summer school to catch up.

Although few people object to the general idea of accountability, many parents and advocacy groups (especially in major cities) say it's not fair to hold children back for failures beyond

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their control, such as having bad teachers, inadequate resources or difficult family situations. Teachers often say they should not be held accountable for problems that extend beyond the classroom, such as poor parental supervision or the bureaucratic incompetence of central office administrators.

Dealing with the special concerns of parents

Parents typically ask three questions when their child receives low test scores: Why didn't you warn me that my child was in jeopardy? Why didn't you provide better instruction? And what are you going to do differently (such as hiring better teachers and providing students with extra help in the summer or on weekends) so that this doesn't happen again? Many parents of both successful and unsuccessful students also say:

- There are too many tests and too much "teaching to the test" — and not enough basic classroom instruction;
- Subjects like art and music are getting crowded out of the curriculum because there is so much emphasis on the core subjects of reading, writing, math and science; and
- No single exam should carry so much weight.

Kentucky, Maryland and Washington have been especially active in helping prepare parents and others for these new tests. See pages 8 and 11.

Dealing with the special concerns of teachers

Teachers have many of the same issues as parents about excessive testing, too much emphasis on core subjects and the high stakes associated with these new state tests. In fact, a lot of parent anxiety is a direct result of teacher anxiety. Teachers also want to make sure they get the professional development they need to teach to the new, higher standards.

To see what the Kentucky business community is doing to promote more professional development for teachers, refer to page 10.

Concerns about costs

Compared to fill-in-the-bubble, multiple-choice items scored by machine, performance-based test items such as essays are more expensive to develop, pilot-test, administer and score. This is partly due to the fact that standards vary from state to state and thus each state's new tests must be custom designed, because "off-the-shelf," national tests are rarely a good match for each state's unique standards. Critics often use the cost issue to suggest that the new tests are not worth it.

New ways of reporting results can be confusing

First, the new tests examine how students perform based on the state's explicit academic standards or criteria. But old tests (norm-referenced tests) tended to "grade on a curve" and only compared students to a national or state average — without regard to how close or far

the students were to reaching the standards. It takes careful and extended explanations for people to become comfortable with this different perspective.

Visualizing a group of students hiking up a mountain is a helpful metaphor. The old measures would look at each student based only on where he or she was in comparison to the rest of the group; the newer criterion-referenced tests instead look at how close or far the student is from reaching the top of mountain, in addition to where the rest of the group is.

Second, parents often are most interested in comparative information: how well their child is doing compared to others in the school and how well their child's school or district is doing compared to those nearby. Businesses, especially those with operations in many states and countries, want to know how students in one state or nation compare with students in another. However, some states have chosen not to provide such comparisons; instead, they only show how students are doing in relation to the fixed learning standards.

On the other hand, some states and districts often err on the side of inundating parents and taxpayers with far too much information: page after page shows how students did compared to the standard in each subject, compared to all students in the state, compared to all students in the district, compared to all students from the same demographic category, compared to how much was spent on each student and so on. The data, while informative, tends to be overwhelming.

And the new terminology can pose problems. Parents who grew up with letter grades (A, B, C, D, F) aren't sure how to interpret scores that rate their child as an "emerging reader," a "novice" or an "apprentice." Too few states and school districts take the time to translate these new concepts into more familiar terms.

To help people judge a test's rigor for themselves and to keep community members involved, Texas and Missouri release test items to the public every year. ***See pages 12 and 14.***

Technical issues sometimes become controversial

Support for the new tests sometimes is undermined by decisions over technical issues — for example, whether to use all multiple-choice questions or add some performance items, whether to test all students on the same items or whether to have each student take only a sample of the total test.

Sometimes the controversy emerges because much of the work is done in secret. Although test developers often release sample assessment items for review during the development phase, actual test questions often are closely guarded to ensure the integrity of the school accountability system.

Appendix A:
The Basics About Assessments

There are a wide variety of assessment tools, and knowing about different types of testing methods and how they are used can help you participate more effectively in the discussion about what kinds of assessments are best for your state.

This section offers a brief overview about the kinds of questions that need to be answered in developing or choosing a new state assessment. To locate more detailed sources of information, see Appendix C.

What is the purpose of testing?

Determine at the outset how an assessment will be used.

For diagnosis? In this case, educators use test results to identify students' strengths and weaknesses — and modify their classroom instruction accordingly.

For school, teacher or student accountability? In some cases, accountability comes with consequences: students are held back; teachers are placed on probation, fired or, in the case of positive results, given bonuses; and schools are given bonuses or extra assistance or, in worst cases, taken over by the state.

If the test is designed mainly to measure school accountability (as in Maryland), students do not have to take the complete exam; instead, different students are given different sections of the test, which is enough to provide a profile of how well the school is doing. However, if the test is used to measure student accountability (as in Washington), students must take the complete exam.

How will scores be reported?

Tests are scored in two basic ways. Most of us are most familiar with norm-referenced tests, such as the Stanford Achievement Test, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the California Achievement Test. Norm-referenced tests are good for comparing students to each other by showing how an individual student's test score compares with the scores of students in a "norming" group, such as a nationally representative sample of students who are the same age. Student scores tend to be reported by percentile: students who do less well than the national norming group score under the 50th percentile, while students who perform better than the norm score above the 50th percentile. For example, a student who scores at the 70th percentile has done as well as or better than 70 percent of other peer students taking the test.

The second kind of scoring measures a student's performance against a criterion or a standard, not against other students' performance. These are called criterion-referenced scores or standards-based scores. In these tests, scores depend on how well students demonstrate that their knowledge meets the standards on which the assessment is based. Not surprisingly, as states develop their own more rigorous standards, they're starting to develop criterion-referenced assessments to match. Students often are assigned a level of proficiency in meeting an individual standard, such as "advanced," "proficient" or "partially proficient."

Test results can be reported both ways; it's up to the state and the test developer to decide.

Who will develop your test(s)?

Generally, states have three options for developing an assessment. First, state education officials and curriculum and testing specialists can develop their own *customized* tests to dovetail with state standards. While the "homegrown" approach is the most time-consuming and complex, the advantages are that the assessments test what is taught in the classroom and that teachers, parents and other community members feel a stronger sense of ownership of them.

A second option is to hire a *national testing company* to develop a customized assessment , based on state standards and other criteria state educators designate. Well-known companies include CTB/McGraw-Hill (Monterey, Calif.), Riverside Publishing (Itasca, Ill.), and Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement (San Antonio, Texas). One advantage is that these companies, which have clients in many states, can build in enough common test items to allow comparative scores.

Finally, a state or district can buy an *"off-the-shelf" assessment* like Terra Nova (from CTB/McGraw-Hill), New Standards or the Stanford Achievement Test (both products of Harcourt Brace Educational Measurement). This usually is the most cost-effective option, but the test might not be aligned very well with the state's specific standards.

What kinds of test items will be used?

Different testing items have different purposes — and unique advantages and disadvantages. Tests typically include more than one kind of question, such as multiple-choice and short-answer essays. Here are some of the choices that states have.

Multiplechoice Fill-in-the-bubble tests are quick and inexpensive to administer and score — and good for assessing basic skills. One downside is that students can get the right answer just by guessing.

Short-answer. Students fill in the blank or write an explanatory sentence or phrase to explain how they arrived at their answer. This is commonly used in combination with multiple-choice questions.

Performance tasks. These include writing assignments, demonstrations (like a science experiment) or presentations (like a skit). These assessments tend to give a more complete picture of students' knowledge and skills — especially in areas like communications, problem solving and teamwork. More than one answer may be acceptable, but students must explain or defend it. These assessments obviously can't be scored by computer, which makes them more expensive and more subject to inconsistent scoring by different scorers.

Combinations. An assessment may contain a mix of multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, performance tasks and writing assignments.

Portfolios. States such as Vermont and Kentucky also are using portfolios, which are a collection of student work that shows the range and quality of the work over a period of time and in various content areas. These are especially useful for documenting a student's learning progress over time. Teachers likely will need special training to instruct and assess students using portfolios.

New Tests Are More Rigorous: South Carolina, Grade 8

Past question from the Basic Skills Assessment Program:

A sugar cube dissolving in water is an example of:

A. a physical change
B. a chemical change
C. an atomic change
D. a kinetic change

New, rigorous question to be added:

The picture below* shows the same amount of sugar in two different forms.

When sugar dissolves in water, is a physical change taking place? Explain your answer.

Design an experiment to determine which form of sugar would dissolve faster. Be sure to list all the materials you will use and the steps of your procedure.

**Not shown here*
Source: South Carolina Office of Assessment

Before and After: Washington

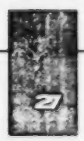
The new test differs from the ones that children in Washington state have been taking for the last 20 years.

Old State Test:

- All multiple-choice questions
- Student's score is compared with a selected group of other students who took the same test
- Scored by machines
- Measures some kinds of knowledge and skills very well, such as vocabulary and computation

New State Test:

- Multiple-choice, short-answer and extended-response questions
- Student's level of knowledge on a subject is compared to what is considered mastery of the subject
- Scored by specially trained experts
- Measures vocabulary, computation and subjects that can't be measured by computer-scored tests, such as writing and listening



Commonly Used Tests

International Tests

- **TIMSS: Third International Mathematics and Science Study.** This test is given in over 41 industrialized countries to students in the equivalents of fourth, eighth and 12th grades. Results from the test are used to compare education and student achievement among participating countries.

- **International Baccalaureate.** This standardized exam is given to students following a rigorous two-year college preparatory curriculum. The test is offered internationally, only at approved high schools.

National Tests

- **NAEP: National Assessment of Educational Progress.** This federally funded test is given to a sample of fourth, eighth and 12th graders in math, science, reading, writing, history/geography and other subjects. Data from NAEP are used to measure the progress of students nationally and in selected subjects in each participating state.

State Competency Tests

- State competency tests are administered to high school students in many states and must be passed before a student may graduate. They usually are benchmarked to a sixth- to ninth-grade competency level.

Standards-Linked Tests

- Standards-linked tests measure students' knowledge of a set of academic standards. Students often are tested at several grades, and results may be linked to graduation for high school students.

Commercial Tests

- These tests are developed and scored by a testing company and sold to school districts and states. Examples include the **Terra Nova, ITBS (Iowa Test of Basic Skills), CAT (California Achievement Test)** and **SAT-9 (Stanford Achievement Test, ninth edition).**

College Entrance Tests

- **SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test)** and **ACT (American College Test).** These norm-referenced, multiple-choice tests in verbal and math are required for admission to many colleges and universities and are taken by high school juniors and seniors nationwide.

- **SAT II** or **Achievement Tests.** These are norm-referenced tests that measure knowledge in a particular subject (e.g., history, science) and also are used in college admission.

- **AP (Advanced Placement) Tests.** These are in-depth tests focusing on a specific subject area that high school students take following a college-level course. With a passing score, students can earn college credit or place out of introductory classes at many colleges.

Appendix B:
Sample Communications Plan

The Partnership for Learning in Washington state has been especially effective in using communications to build public support for the state's new standards and assessment system. We have included below the group's 1998 Communications Goals and Schedule of Communications Activities.

1998 Communications Goals

Ensure the message to parents and the public about the fourth grade test scores is communicated effectively and broadly. Continue to reinforce the need for higher academic standards and expectations in schools and prevent a "backsliding" to lower expectations. Help parents and teachers understand and support the new tests, as well as support the overall statewide effort to improve academic achievement.

Build public awareness about the next steps in Washington's academic achievement strategy: the voluntary seventh grade test, the certificate of mastery, and the new accountability mechanisms.

Broaden the commitment of local employers, community activists, and education leaders to the academic achievement effort. Provide resources, information, and encouragement to these leaders to use emerging test score data to make improvements in curriculum and instruction.

Solidify the existing base of support among elected officials, community leaders, parents, and educators for the academic achievement effort.

Program Emphases

- Strengthen existing network of Partnership community advisors by creating more formal structures and workplans and by providing specific resources to communities.
- Identify and begin organizing significant grassroots leadership in three new communities.
- Implement new interactive model of community breakfast meetings.
- Direct greater resources to advertising and creative media.
- Provide information to parents and citizens that they can use to work with schools — both to improve schools and to improve individual academic achievement.

1998: Schedule of Communication Activities

Activities	Audience		
	Opinion Leaders	Parents	Educators
1. Broad Public Information			
Publications			
• Thematic quarterly newsletter	•	•	•
• Parent's & teacher's guides: 4th grade & 7th grade test scores		•	•
• Easy-to-read parent's brochure		•	
• Flyers to parents		•	
• Comparison guide to old vs. new tests	•	•	•
• One-page overview of education reform	•	•	•
• Business person's/employer's guide to education reform	•		
• Explanations of certificate of mastery and new accountability	•	•	•
• Postcard to "supporters" on PFL mailing list	•	•	•
Targeted Advertising			
• PSA campaign for Spanish-speaking parents		•	
Media			
• Meetings with editorial boards	•		
• Assorted op-eds: 4th grade test scores and 7th grade tests	•	•	•
• Newsletter articles to community groups and businesses	•	•	•
Video/Internet			
• Video explaining 4th and 7th grade tests		•	•
• Maintain/update web site	•	•	•
Research			
• Follow-up 1996 poll with 3-4 questions on standards and testing	•		•
• Focus groups on communicating about accountability	•	•	•
2. Community Support and Grassroots Development			
Community Outreach			
• Community breakfasts (Everett, Spokane, Yakima, Tri-Cities)	•	•	•
• Summer workshop for school district communicators		•	•
• Fall workshop for new legislators	•		
• Briefings to community leaders on accountability recommendations	•		
• Meetings/follow-up with 30 chambers of commerce	•		
• "Business sector" meetings with Bergeson	•		
• "Brown bag" lunches with employees on tests		•	
Community Advisers (8 cities)			
• Local events to explain new tests	•	•	
• Speakers' bureau	•	•	
• Outreach to local churches/minority groups	•	•	
• Support for locally-developed communication plans	•	•	•

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Appendix C: Resources

National Level

Achieve, Inc.
1280 Massachusetts Ave., Suite 410
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 496-6300 Fax: (617) 496-6361
Internet: www.achieve.org

American Federation of Teachers
555 New Jersey Ave., N.W.
Washington, DC 20001-2079
Tel: (202) 879-4400 Fax: (202) 879-4576
Internet: www.aft.org

A-Plus Communications
2200 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 1102
Arlington, VA 22201
Tel: (703) 524-7325 Fax: (703) 528-9692
Internet: www.apluscommunications.com

Business Coalition for Education Reform
c/o the National Alliance of Business
1201 New York Ave., N.W., Suite 700
Washington, DC 20005-3917
Tel: (800) 787-2848 Fax: (202) 289-2875
Internet: www.bcer.org

The Business Roundtable
1615 L Street, N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202)872-1260 Fax: (202)466-3509
Internet: www.brtable.org

The Coalition for Goals 2000/ StandardsWork
School of Education and Human Development
The George Washington University
Washington, DC 20052
Tel: (202) 835-2000 Fax: (202) 659-4494
Internet: www.goalline.org

Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards and Student Testing
University of California at Los Angeles
405 Hilgard Ave.
1339 Moore Hall
Los Angeles, CA 90024-1522
Tel: (310) 206-1530 Fax: (310) 825-3883
Internet: www.cresst96.cse.ucla.edu

Council for Basic Education
1319 F St., N.W., Suite 900
Washington, DC 20004-1152
Tel: (202) 347-4171 Fax: (202) 347-5407
Internet: www.c-b-e.org

Education Commission of the States
707 17th St., Suite 2700
Denver, CO 80202-3427
Tel: (303) 299-3600 Fax: (303) 296-8332
Internet: www.ecs.org

Education Excellence Partnership
1615 L St., N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20036
Tel: (202) 872-1260 Fax: (202) 466-3509
Internet: www.edex.org

Education Trust
1725 K St., N.W., Suite 200
Washington, DC 20006
Tel: (202) 293-1217 Fax: (202) 293-2605
Internet: www.edtrust.org

Education Week
6935 Arlington Rd., Suite 100
Bethesda, MD 20814-5233
Tel: (301) 280-3100 Fax: (301) 280-3200
Internet: www.edweek.org

FairTest (National Center for Fair and Open Testing)
342 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139
Tel: (617) 864-4810 Fax: (617) 497-2224
Internet: www.fairtest.org

National Education Goals Panel
1255 22nd St., N.W., Suite 502
Washington, DC 20037
Tel: (202) 724-0015 Fax: (202) 632-0957
Internet: www.negp.gov

Public Agenda
6 E. 39th St.
New York, NY 10016-0112
Tel: (212) 686-6610 Fax: (212) 889-3461
Internet: www.publicagenda.org

State Level

Many other state groups are excellent resources in addition to the groups listed below. These groups are included because they were quoted or referred to in this guide.

Maryland Business Roundtable for Education
111 S. Calvert St., Suite 2250
Baltimore, MD 21202
Tel: (410) 727-0448 Fax: (410) 727-7699
Internet: www.techorpsmd.org/mbrt

Massachusetts Business Alliance for Education
405 Grove St.
Worcester, MA 01605
Tel: (508) 754-9425 Fax: (508) 831-1303
Internet: www.allfored.org

Massachusetts Coalition for Higher Standards
1030 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02138
Tel: (617) 492-0580 Fax: (617) 497-7944

Michigan Business Leaders for Education Excellence
600 Walnut St.
Lansing, MI 48933
Tel: (517) 371-2100 Fax: (517) 371-7224
Internet: www.michamber.com/foundation/workbook/mlbee.html

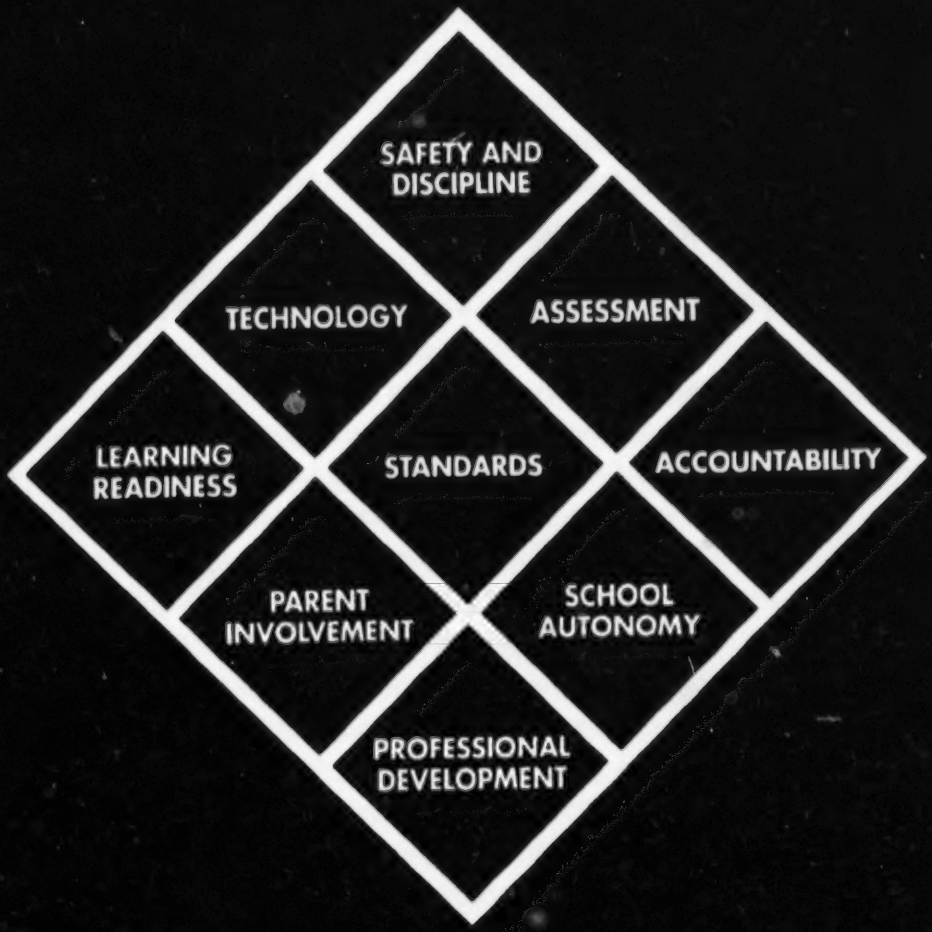
Ohio Business Roundtable
41 S. High St., Suite 2240
Columbus, OH 43215
Tel: (614) 469-1044 Fax: (614) 469-1049

Partnership for Kentucky Schools
P.O. Box 1658
167 W. Main St., Suite 310
Lexington, KY 40507
Tel: (800) 928-2111 Fax: (606) 233-0760

Partnership for Learning
1215 4th Ave., Suite 1020
Seattle, WA 98161-1007
Tel: (206) 625-9655 Fax: (206) 447-0502
Internet: www.partnership-wa.org

Texas Business and Education Coalition
400 W. 15th St., Suite 809
Austin, TX 78701-2447
Tel: (512) 480-8232 Fax: (512) 480-8055
Internet: www-tenet.cc.utexas.edu/Pub/tbec/tbec.html

The Nine Essential Components of a Successful Education System



THE
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